

SHULTERS

Romanticism Versus Realism
in the Works of Jean Richepin

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ROMANTICISM VERSUS REALISM IN THE
WORKS OF JEAN RICHEPIN

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BY

JOHN RAYMOND SHULTERS

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

John Raymond Shulters

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ROMANTICISM VERSUS REALISM

IN THE WORKS OF

JEAN RICHEPIN

I

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Jean Richepin was born at Medea in Algeria, February 4, 1849. The son of a French army surgeon, Dr. Jules Auguste Richepin, the first years of his life, like those of Victor Hugo, were spent in a continual wandering about from one army post to another. During this pilgrimage we find Dr. Richepin and his family at Pau, at Bourg, at Uzès, at Lyons, at Versailles and various other cities or army posts of France.(1) The departure of the father for the Crimea in 1854 necessitated the leaving behind of Jean, who was placed with friends in Paris. Little is to be found regarding his mother, who, it may be inferred, died while he was yet a small child, leaving him the alternatives of a wandering life with his father or a neglected existence among relatives or friends. From such surroundings it is small wonder that he later developed the independence of spirit and rebellion against authority which his stormy youth and early manhood showed.

In 1859 he was sent to the Lycée Napoléon where he spent six rather unhappy years but from which he issued triumphantly with

1. Claretie, Hist. de la Littérature Française, v.4, p.306.

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his baccalauréat and a desire to be a poet at the age of sixteen. His father naturally wished him to follow his own profession of medicine and so he was sent for a year to the provincial town of Douai, in which place he attended the lycée as externe, being with relatives. The next year his father insisted on his commencing the study of medicine with him, in spite of the young man's wish to return to Paris for a trial in the literary field. This desire thwarted, Jean ran away to England and was four months in London. On his return, one of his instructors persuaded his father to prepare him for the Ecole Normale and, much against his will, he took up his studies again in the Institution Massin; in 1868 he was received at the Ecole Normale. "J'y entrai, nous dit-il, avec le ferme propos de ne point suivre la carrière universitaire et même de demeurer rue d'Ulm le moins longtemps possible". (1) But he acknowledges later that he derived much inspiration and accustomed himself to hard work during the time he spent there.

During the war of 1870, he left school in company with many of his fellow-students and joined the Army of the East. The ebb-tide of the war stranded him at Besançon where he worked at journalism for some time. On March 20, 1871, he returned to Paris. There he passed through the stormy days of the Commune, living by literary hack-writing and preparing to do something for himself. The career of Jules Vallès attracted his attention and his first literary work was a biographical sketch of the life of that independent leader, which he entitled Les Etapes d'un Réfractaire (1872).

1. Claretie, op. cit. v.4, p.307.

It was at this period of his life that he first became acquainted with a group of struggling young literary men some of whom have since become famous. Separated from his family, either by a quarrel or by the necessity of earning his living, (1) he allied himself with Maurice Bouchor, Raoul Ponchon and Paul Bourget together with others in a like condition of poverty and aspiration.

Richepin's first independent work, (2) La Chanson des Gueux, called forth a storm of criticism and execration because of its freedom of language. Formal proceedings were instituted against him and, in spite of an excellent defense, he was compelled to spend thirty days in the prison of Sainte Pélagie, besides forfeiting his civil rights for a time and paying a heavy fine. While in prison he wrote Les Morts Bizarres. Soon after came Les Carresses and Madame André. This period of his life was naturally the one in which he was most violent against organized society and restraint. In 1879 he was married to the first Madame Richepin, with whom he lived - intermittently at least - until 1902. Of this marriage were born two sons, Jacques and Tiarko, and a daughter, Sacha. The eldest son, Jacques, has become a writer of some note. It was not in the nature of things that this marriage should be an entirely happy one. Richepin was, at this period, in the height of his revolt against society and he apparently

1. Claretie, op. cit. v.4, p.309; Brisson, La Comédie Littéraire, p.87, for the opposing views of the case.
2. He had already written L'Etoile in collaboration with André Gill.

left his wife frequently, to return to her at will. Vance Thompson says of him, (1) "He was as one who walked out under the stars and beat his breast and screamed defiance at the Elemental Laws." In 1883 Nana-Sahib was produced at the Porte Saint-Martin with Sarah Bernhardt in the rôle of Djamna. According to Thompson's account, (2) Richepin was violently in love with Bernhardt, and on the last night of the engagement, the author himself played the part of the lover, making his personal passion for the great actress public before the world.

Then the roving life called him again; he quarreled with Bernhardt, went to Newfoundland, then back to France, where he finally returned to his family for a year in Marseilles. Leaving his wife again, he went for a journey to Africa, but returned after some months of roving about. This was apparently his last taste of vagrant-life for, from this point on, we find him hard at work in Paris, producing one or more books a year and establishing himself in a comfortable home. His work began to find favor with the public and, as a result, ample returns, both financial and social, began to come to him. This was the greatest period of production of his whole literary career. Nana-Sahib was followed on the stage by Monsieur Scapin, (1886), Le Flibustier (1888), Le Chien de Garde (1889), and Par la Glaive (1892). After Miarka, ou la Fille à l'Ourse, published the same year in which Nana-Sahib was produced, came the novels Braves Gens (1886), Gésarine (1888) and

1. French Portraits, p.142.

2. Ibid.

Le Cadet (1890). Richepin's most vigorous poetry was written during the same period; Les Blasphèmes appeared in 1884, followed by La Mer (1886), and Mes Paradis (1894).

The change in his fortunes, brought about by the success of his literary work, caused a corresponding modification of Richepin's views. His later works, while by no means lacking in vigor of style or freedom of expression, show a decided toning-down from his earlier manner. The outbreaks against religion, law and order are less frequent in his writings just as they were in his life.(1) With a rapidly increasing reputation in the literary world and a solid accumulation of worldly wealth, there came to him a new satisfaction in the well-ordered, busy life of his home in Paris and he no longer cared to pursue the career of a chemineau.

A single event came to mar the happiness of Richepin's later life. In 1902 he was divorced from the first Mme. Richepin and the same year he was married to Marie-Emmanuele de Stempowska, daughter of the Baroness of Dürerlohe. No facts are available regarding the causes of the divorce but we may infer that Mme. Richepin was his inferior both in education and social position (2) and that life in common became insupportable to them. We may also infer from the close following of the second marriage upon the divorce that a new affection had come to supplant the old, to which, as we have already seen, Richepin was none too faithful at times.

The present household, consisting of M. and Mme. Richepin and

1. Brisson, La Comédie Littéraire, p.87.

2. Ibid. Portraits Intimes, p.24; Thompson, op. cit. p.144.

their two sons, Jean-Loup and Jean-Pierre, dwells in the Rue de la Tour at Paris; besides this home in the city M. Richepin owns a country house at Montchauvet and a villa in the Balearic Isles. At Paris he busies himself with the preparation of lectures to be given in various educational institutions or on special occasions, and with writing. His latest book, La Route d'Émeraude, appeared in 1909.

M. Richepin's merit as an author received the highest recognition France can give to its literary men when, in 1908, he was elected a member of the Academy. He took his place in its ranks (1) and pronounced his discourse February 18, 1909. He has been accorded many lesser honors in addition, having been at various times vice-president of the Société des Auteurs Dramatiques, president of the Association Général de Publicistes Français, member of the Conseil Supérieur d'Enseignement du Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation and vice-president of the Société des Sports Populaires

1. See L'Illustration, Feb 20, 1909, for portrait of Richepin in the garb of an Academician.

II

INTRODUCTORY

The purpose of this thesis will be, not to represent the work of Richepin as completely romantic, but to show that, for the most part, it is strongly dominated by a spirit of romanticism, which opposes itself to the realism and naturalism with which his books are filled. The survival of romanticism in the works of present-day writers in general, is a fact well recognized by critics and students of literature as will be shown by later citations. The romanticism to be found today is not, however, that of the school of 1820 -50, but a product of it, modified and freed from many of the old characteristic traits, but still clearly recognizable as romanticism. Under the various titles of "ultra-romanticism", "last state of romanticism" and "romantique attardé", this genre has been attributed to Richepin by various critics. (1)

At the outset of this work two definitions are necessary - those of romanticism and realism. Following these, the remainder of this chapter will be given up to the evidence in works of criticism supporting the question under discussion. Evidence in Richepin's works will be contained in the three chapters following under the successive heads of poetry, novel, drama. Finally, conclusions will be given in the last chapter.

1. See later notes for precise references.

Romanticism, viewed from the present, has two characteristic aspects ; one, contrasted with classicism, shows it as a revolt against tradition, both in form and content, and as a struggle for the expression of the individual ; the other side, facing the school of realism which followed, presents in opposition to the latter an exalted idealism, a love for the beautiful and an abhorrence of the ugly in nature. Precise definition of the tenets of romanticism has never been agreed upon (1) but these two views give the most important points.

Realism (2) is, in its turn, a revolt against the sentimentalism and idealism of the romantic school : its purpose is to present a true picture of life, without intrusion of the author's personality or insistence on a moral lesson. The true realistic work is one which presents a "cross-section" of society for inspection. Naturalism represents the ultra-realistic stage of the school, in which the revolting and horrible phases of life are sought and described by preference.

In seeking for evidences outside his literary works in regard to Richepin's romanticism, the first authority to be consulted is, naturally, Richepin himself in the prefaces to some of his books and in other personal expressions of his views. His own statement that he was allied with none of the contemporary schools is, in itself, an admission that he found their compass too small to in-

1. Claretie, op. cit. v.4,p.85 : Pellissier, La Mouvement Littéraire au Dix-neuvième Siècle, p.257 ff. : P.Albert, La Littérature Française au Dix-neuvième Siècle, v.1,p.19.

clude his style, and that he refused to be bound by the limitations of any school. In a preface which he wrote for a volume of Ginisty's Année Littéraire (1) he expresses his repugnance to schools and at the same time gives voice to his opinion that the cultivation of a genre is a waste of time to a young writer. "Mais le pire encore" he says "c'est le temps perdu ----- celui de la jeunesse, de la verve, de la sève, de la floraison, de la vaillance, de l'enfantement, de la confiance en soi, de l'orgueil qui croit aux miracles et qui en fait!" This statement indicates clearly that Richepin believed there was still room for the idealisms and enthusiasms of youth, or in other words, for romantic material, in a literary work.

Romanticism has always been regarded as Christian in contradistinction to the paganism of the classics. Richepin cannot by any stretch of the imagination be regarded as friendly to the Church, although La Martyre contains some fine touches of Christian character, but it must be noted that the critics are unanimous (2) in regarding his violent expressions of atheism as the cries of a poseur seeking to attract attention rather than to prove anything. His own views on the subject are best expressed in the prefaces to Les Blasphèmes and Mes Paradis; in the first he avows his intention to formulate a system of atheistic philosophy, of which that volume is the first book and which is to include Le Paradis de l'Athée,

1. V.6, 1890.

2. With the exception of the Jesuit, Cornut, who is of course prejudiced (see his Malfaiteurs Littéraires, p.207) and J. Barbey d'Aurevilly, Les Poètes, p.193. For the opposite view see Gille, La Bataille Littéraire, v.3, p.29; Lemaitre, Les Contemporains, v.3, p.320. Kreyssig, Geschichte der Französische National-Literatur, v.2, p.355.

in which words, the romantic is reborn, in a literary world.

[illegible][illegible]

L'Evangile de l'Antechrist and Les Chansons Eternelles; in the second he confesses his former "philosophic intoxication" and admits that it has passed from him, leaving him more tolerant.

Brisson (1) calls Richepin romantic "in certain respects" while insisting on his independence of all schools; although he does not emphasize the point, he lays stress on Richepin's love of independence, hatred of rule and vagabond tendencies, all of which are distinctly romantic.

Lemaître (2), who has written one of the best pieces of criticism on Richepin, says that most of the Parnassian poets considered him "comme un retardataire, et tantôt comme le dernier des romantiques"; further on he himself calls him "un Villon ----- qui aurait passé par le romantisme". It is worthy of note here that both Lemaître and Barbey d'Aurevilly speak of Richepin as the literary descendant of Villon and Rabelais, both of whom are quite generally regarded as remote precursors of the romantic movement.

In a German work on French literature (3) the poetry of Richepin is characterized as an imitation of Baudelaire and his school. "Diese Art Poesie" the author continues "ist eine Entwicklungsform des Romantizismus der ja im Gegensatz zu den klassischen Einschränkungen fordert, dass die ganze Fülle und Tiefe des menschlich-

1. Pointes Sèches, p.171.

2. Op. cit. v.3, p.319.

3. Suchier--Birch-Hirschfeld, Französische Literatur-Geschichte, p.707.

-en Lebens Gegenstand der Poesie sein müsse, also auch die niedrigsten und abstossensten Erscheinungen und Regungen". This view is interesting because it is almost exactly identical with that expressed by Professor Irving Babbitt (1) in speaking of Poe's influence on French literature. In the course of his lecture Professor Babbitt characterized the decadent school as ultra-romantic, at the same time stating that Poe was looked upon as associated with all that is ultra-romantic in French literature. In another part of the same lecture he called attention to Poe's influence in Les Morts Bizarres, thus establishing Richepin's claim to be classed among those writers who show late romantic tendencies.

Lanson (2) pays slight attention to M. Richepin and even the two words of criticism which he allows him are unfriendly; speaking of his novels, he describes them as representing "le dernier état du pur romantisme;" in regard to realistic poetry he makes the following statement (3), which, if given its proper value, means much in considering the verse of Richepin: "La poésie réaliste si elle est possible, n'a pas rencontré d'homme: il faut en chercher les esquisses éparses un peu partout----- disons aussi, pour être juste, çà et là par hasard, dans La Chanson des Gueux". This would seem to indicate that Lanson believes realism to be, from its very nature, a literary genre incapable of adapting itself to verse form

1. In a lecture delivered before the Romance Journal Club of the University of Illinois, Jan. 13, 1911.

2. Hist. de la Lit. Fr. p.1059.

3. Ibid. pp.1065 and 1126: Saintsbury (Short Hist. of Fr. Lit. p.552 and ff.) calls Richepin a poet of naturalism.

1. In a letter dated 1911, the Board of Directors of the
National Library of Medicine, Washington, D.C., advised
that the Library had received a donation of a large
number of books, including a large number of books
on the history of medicine, and that the Library
was planning to publish a list of these books.
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publish a list of these books.

or poetic expression. Several critics (1) have called attention to the fact that Richepin's verse is, in many instances, classic in form and content; he was known as a brilliant Latin and Greek scholar at the Ecole Normale and it was doubtless this early familiarity with the classics which led him later to imitate them. In almost every case, however, those who have pointed out his classic tendencies have also referred to the freedom with which he transgresses the rules of versification when he chooses. If then, with Lanson, we eliminate realistic poetry as practically impossible and take into account Richepin's prevailing freedom from classic restraint, there remains only the term romantic to apply to his verse. (2) In addition to this conclusion, it should also be noted that there is a tendency to compare Richepin's poetry with that of Victor Hugo. Brisson names the author of Les Châtiments as Richepin's master of versification: Lemaître says he permits himself only the licenses authorized by Victor Hugo, and Petit de Julleville also mentions him in connection with the great poet of romanticism. (3)

Vance Thompson (4) classes Richepin as romantic in Monsieur Scapin and Miarka but fails to see anything but realism in Braves Gens, which, however, as will be shown later, has as well-defined a strain of romanticism running through it as Miarka. In addition, several lesser authorities, - French, English and American - mention Richepin as a descendant of the romanticists. (5)

1. Lemaître, op. cit. v.3, p.317; L. Daudet, Les Idées en Marche, p.278; Brisson, Pointes Sèches, p.175.

2. Petit de Julleville, Hist. de la Langue et de la Lit. Fr. v.8, p.60; Suchier--Birch-Hirschfeld, op. cit. p.707.

3. All these references are to be found in the course of the articles referred to in notes 1 and 2.

4. Op.cit. p.151.

5. Konta, Hist. of Fr. Lit., p.446, is the most recent.

[illegible]

Claretie,(1) by far the most appreciative and favorable critic of Richepin's work, devotes a considerable amount of space to him in his Histoire de la Littérature Française. All through his detailed study of the author and his work he cites events from his life and passages from his books which show the tendencies to revolt and desire to be extreme which are so characteristic of Richepin. As an instance of his fondness for the unusual he takes the change of name which appears in Le Cadet and Miarka, where, instead of Picardie, the ancient name, Thiérache, is used to designate the author's terre natale in which the scene of these two novels is laid. Along with this fanciful naming of the province we find Richepin's pretended ancestry by which he claims to be descended from the Huns and Touranians who swarmed over that region in the early times. Claretie, like most of the other critics, makes no effort to place Richepin in any school, but the traits of character which he emphasizes and the choice of excerpts made from his books show that he regarded him as identified with certain features of romanticism. Later, in speaking of the drama, he voices the belief toward which his criticism has tended; "Richepin est bien un romantique attardé".

Throughout this chapter it has been seen that critical opinion is not lacking on the side favoring the placing of Richepin among the writers of today who represent the last vestiges of the romantic school. In the following chapters an attempt will be made to corroborate this evidence by a study of his work with the purpose of selecting such parts as may support this claim.

1. Op. cit. v.4, p.305ff.

2. Ibid, v.4, p.534.

III

POETRY

Richepin's first book of verse, La Chanson des Gueux, (1) cost him thirty days'imprisonment and numerous other inconveniences because the court was shocked by its flagrant naturalism. In the later expurgated editions of the work, he refers ironically to the fact by inserting in the middle of a poem which had felt the hand of the censor, the following two lines, separated from the text as shown here :

(Ici deux gueux s'aimaient jusqu'à la pâmoison,
Et cela m'a valu trente jours de prison.) (2)

Even since its renovation the book is still largely naturalistic in tone (3) but here and there are to be found verses which contain a spirit of romantic idealism. It is in the first division of the work, Gueux des Champs, that this spirit is most strongly felt. Richepin naturally found the life of the country wanderers more charming and full of romance than that of the gueux of Paris, and it is in the roaming life and lack of regularity of the gueux des champs that he most delights. The refrain of the Berceuse with

1. 1876.

2. Idylle de Pauvres, Chanson des Gueux, p.78.

3. For examples see La Neige est Triste, p.158, and Idylle Sanglante, p.81.

which the series begins expresses the spirit of the whole work:

Dors, mon fieu, dors.

Bercé, berçant.

Fait froid dehors.

Ca glace l'sang.

Mais gna d'chez soi

Qu' pour ceux qu'a d'quoi. (1).

These people of the highways, who have no chez soi, nevertheless find joy in life and manage to live in their own erratic fashion.

Gueux de Paris is so full of argot that Richepin found it necessary to append a vocabulary, giving the meaning of the words which he employed. He was perhaps one of the first who dared to write whole poems in which slang terms and phrases of low origin predominated; and yet this putting into the mouth of the Parisian voyou (2) his own language gives local color and reality to the picture. Some of the poems in argot are unreadable without constant reference to the vocabulary. (3).

Nous Autres Gueux (4) are best described by a verse of the poem Noctambules (5):

Ce sont des rêveurs, des poètes,

Des peintres, des musiciens,

Des gueux, un tas de jeunes têtes

Sous des chapeaux très anciens.

1. Ibid. p.6.

2. Ibid. p.165.

3. Ibid. poem Dab, p.184.

4. Ibid. p.199.

5. Ibid. p.278.

-- all those, in fact, whose present life is full of strife and labor but who are struggling toward an ideal.

La Chanson des Gueux is romantic in spirit while in many places naturalistic in outward appearance. There is, throughout its pages, a subjectivity on the part of the author (1) and an atmosphere of sympathy for the gueux which places it above a mere realistic recital of vagabond life. This same spirit appears to a great extent in Miarka and Le Chemineau. In La Chanson des Gueux, such poems as La Flûte (2), La Plainte du Bois, (3) and A Mon Ami Sans Nom (4), together with a great part of La Fin des Gueux (5) with which the book ends, may be regarded as showing the romantic tendencies of Richepin's verse.

Les Caresses (6) shows, more clearly than any other of his books of poetry, Richepin's mastery of the regular verse-forms. Rondeaux, sonnets and ballades are interspersed with short narrative poems, some in pentameter, others in various sorts of lines, but all showing a surprising degree of finish. In its fine regularity the book is in strong contrast to La Chanson des Gueux. Here all outward form is classically pure: the language is unmixed with argot and there is no ungrammatical speech. Evidently the lovers of Les Caresses are not des gueux.

In the titles of the four divisions of the book Richepin shows his fancy for unusual names: instead of calling the seasons by their ordinary names he uses those of the republican calendar months which are characteristic of each season - Floréal, Thermidor, Bru-

1. See Richepin's preface to the edition of 1906.
3. p.43. 4. p.136. 5. p.285.

2. p.41.
6. 1877.

-maire and Nivôse.

A search for romantic tendencies in Les Caresses meets with a rebuff at the outset: Déclaration (1), the introductory poem, commences:

L'amour que je sens, l'amour qui me cuit,
Ce n'est pas l'amour chaste et platonique,
Sorbet à la neige avec un biscuit;
C'est l'amour de chair, c'est un plat tonique.

Nevertheless one is able, in spite of this discouraging beginning, to find, especially in Floréal, something besides naturalistic love-scenes. The poem immediately following (2), has in it nothing which one would expect from its formidable predecessor; on the contrary, it is filled with the romance and beauty of love. So is also the rondeau which follows: so is the sonnet-madrigal which comes next, the serenade following and so on for several pages. There is plenty of naturalism further on in the volume but these first few poems seem like the first awakening of love, when all things are seen through a golden haze.

In Thermidor (3) "l'amour de chair" reaches its height; most of the poems of this division are pictures of love in the guise of a furious, consuming passion (4); yet among all these scenes of alternating desire and gratification are to be found idealistic verses such as Vieilles Amourettes (5) in which is expressed the more melancholy and reminiscent side of romanticism.

1. Les Caresses, p.3. 2. Ibid. p.5.
4. See Nos. VII, p.86, and IX, p.93.

3. Ibid. p.71.
5. Ibid. p.75.

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The first of these is the fact that the data is not
completely accurate. The data is not completely accurate
and is not completely accurate.

The second of these is the fact that the data is not
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and is not completely accurate.

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The eleventh of these is the fact that the data is not
completely accurate. The data is not completely accurate
and is not completely accurate.

The twelfth of these is the fact that the data is not
completely accurate. The data is not completely accurate
and is not completely accurate.

Hélas! bouquets éphémères,
Depuis cette heure lointaine
Combien de larmes amères
Ont coulé dans ma fontaine!

It is but fair to say, however, that this one poem is exceptional ;
most of Thermidor is naturalistic in the extreme.

Brumaire (1), the season of storms and gloomy weather, is made to typify the sorrows and remorse of love and here one finds much that is in contrast to the excesses of Thermidor. The Sonnet d'Automne with which it opens sounds its keynote. Journée Faite (2), L'Herbe Sans Nom (3) and La Mort d'Automne (4) are among the best examples of the melancholy tone with which it is permeated.

Au vent du nord
Qui le batonne,
Le pauvre Automne
Fuit sans remord.

Le vent le mord.
Lui, dans sa tonne
Se pelotonne.
L'Automne est mort

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1. Ibid p. 445.
 2. Ibid.p. 164.
 3. Ibid.p. 168.
 4. Ibid.p. 208.

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Et son glas tinte
Comme une plainte
Dans les derniers

Refrains de fête.

Adieu, paniers!

Vendange est faite.

Nivôse completes the cycle in much the same tone. (1).

To find any traces of romanticism in Les Blasphèmes (2) is practically a hopeless task; its whole trend and purpose is entirely opposed to the romantic spirit. If there are any verses in the whole volume which can be accepted as romantic, their relation to that school is vague and they are few in number. Richepin is, in this work, classic and pagan. It has been noted already, however, that grave doubts have been raised as to the sincerity of his blasphemies and the spirit of Les Blasphèmes must consequently be considered as not entirely representative of Richepin.

La Mer (3) is an idealization of the sea and the sailor's life: the author's own experiences on shipboard gave him a love for the wide, free horizon of the ocean and his adventures later bore fruit in this book of poems and in Le Flibustier. The whole treatment of the subject in La Mer is romantic. One need only cite the fine description of the various sorts of fish and their colorings in Le

1. Ibid. p.215.

2. 1884.

3. 1886.

1880-1881

1881-1882

1882-1883

1883-1884

1884-1885

1885-1886

1886-1887

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1909-1910

Chalut as an example of Richepin's idealization of the commonplace.

(1) In the same poem the fisherman's work is treated in the same manner with suppression of the more or less unpleasant features. The two narrative poems, Les Trois Matelots de Groix (2) and Le Serment (3) tell of the grasp which the sea has on those who live upon it and how an almost fatalistic charm draws them back when they seek to leave it or are kept away.

The Grandes Chansons (4) in honor of the sea exalt and surround it with mystery still further ;

C'est un mystère,

Qu'étant pareille, on l'aime autant. (5)

So common a thing as the salt is made the subject of a very idealistic poem ;

O diamant, ô perle fine

Digne du front des souverains,

Et qu'on devrait comme divine

Clore en de précieux écrins ----- . (6)

In La Mer, as in La Chanson des Gueux, it is again the romantic spirit dominating realistic subject-matter.

Mes Paradis (7), the remodeled Paradis de l'Athée promised by Richepin in the preface of Les Blasphèmes, has, in its present form, little of that which it was originally intended to be. Richepin

1. La Mer, p.166.

2. Ibid. p.194.

3. Ibid. p.207.

4. Ibid. p.269.

5. Ibid. p.271.

6. Ibid. p.292.

7. 1894.

explains in the preface his reasons for changing his plan and his words on this subject are significant of his change of attitude since the writing of Les Blasphèmes. (1) This change would be noticeable in the poems themselves if there were no preface to call attention to it. The earlier collection was notable for its violent rationalism while in Mes Paradis one finds many touches of imaginative and idealistic thought. A sonnet in honor of youth (2) has these lines ;

O jeunesse, c'est toi qu'il faut que l'on vénère
Même dans tes excès ----- .

Donc, à déraisonner, la jeunesse a raison.-----

Another poem, a ballade, (3) is worthy of notice, of which the envoi is as follows ;

Prince, il n'est pas de guérison
Pour nous autres, fous et rebelles,
Mangeurs d'air, buveurs d'horizon.
Mais que les étoiles sont belles!

Les Iles d'Or, the final group of poems, is a strange mixture of idealism and realism, quite in accord with Richépin's usual style. While the "golden isles" are for him earthly paradises in which material joys abound, there are many allusions to other joys of a higher nature. The poem, Pardon, Métaphysique, (4) sums up all that the author felt concerning the "au delà de raison".

-
1. See the preface to Mes Paradis.
 2. Mes Paradis, p.129.
 3. Ibid. p.182.
 4. Ibid. p.337.

In La Bombarde (1) as in Les Blasphèmes, most of the verse is strongly suggestive of naturalism. Only here and there are to be found romantic touches, usually at the close of a poem. The Epi-logues, (2) the last section of the work, seems to be less realistic in tone and occasionally a bit of idealism comes out in contrast to the crude realities of the rest. The poem, L'Espéreur, is one of the best examples ;

Du haut de la falaise haute
Où soufflent de ses quarante ans

Les durs autans,

L'homme voit se perdre à la côte

Les beaux bateaux de son printemps.

His fine fleet of hopes is wrecked, but out of the débris he builds a fleet of rafts, only to have them, in turn, wrecked on the shore.

Un bout de planche, un bout de toile ---
is all that is left him of the rafts. Nevertheless he embarks on this frail support ;

Puis, les bras las, la tête blanche,

Sur la grande qui retentit,

Seul et petit,

Loque au vent, chevauchant sa planche,

Le coeur plein d'espoir, il partit. (3)

1. 1899.

2. La Bombarde, p.339.

3. Ibid. p.368.

IV

NOVEL

Almost half of Richepin's work in prose fiction is represented by volumes of short stories. The immense popularity of this form of writing in recent years, brought about by the admirable tales of François Coppée and others, did not fail to produce its influence on Richepin, who, like many novelists of the last half of the nineteenth century, devoted to it a considerable portion of his labors. His first attempt in this field, Soeur Doctrrouvé, merited publication in the Revue des Deux Mondes, (1) and may therefore be regarded as successful. The tone of this story is characteristic of Richepin's tales; a young girl sacrifices her hopes in life and enters a convent, in order that her dot may be devoted to the advancement of a selfish brother, a young nobleman who desires to contract a marriage which will retain the family honor intact. The sister had already refused an alliance with a rich young bourgeois, in conformity to the wishes of her mother and brother. The climax of the story comes when, several years later, she receives a letter from her brother, informing her that he is about to marry a rich Jewess for her money. Soeur Doctrrouvé dies from the shock of learning that her sacrifice has been wasted on an ingrate.

1. V.20,p.405 ; Mar. 15,1877.

Pessimism is the keynote of most of Richepin's short stories: as has just been noted in the case of Soeur Doctrrouvé, they emphasize more than anything else the futility of sacrifice or of adherence to an ideal. Les Morts Bizarres, (1) the first volume which appeared, is a succession of pictures of death in every conceivable form of horror and misery. Its tales have been justly compared with those of Poe; morbidity verging on madness is the most striking characteristic of a great number of them. In this collection, in Cauchemars (2) and in La Miseloque (3) many of the stories verge on the pathological. The characters are chiefly notable for their adherence to fixed ideas of various sorts, or for their colossal vices. To find specimens of Richepin's ultra-romanticism, (4) one has only to turn to any of these volumes of short stories, where examples of it abound. The objection might be raised that this sort of product resembles naturalism very closely, and indeed, it is not at all difficult to find passages which remind one more of Huysmans' Là-Bas than anything else; yet with all the naturalistic presentation there is, even in Les Morts Bizarres, an occasional reversion to the other sort of romanticism - to the idealistic side. Constant Guignard, the first "mort bizarre", is a man who is always performing acts of heroism, which, either from their being ill-timed or from some other cause, always turn to his own misfortune without aiding others. He turns aside a runaway horse,

1. 1877.

2. 1892.

3. 1893.

4. As defined by Babbitt (in the lecture already referred to; see note 2, p. 11).

only to find that there is no one in the vehicle, while the frightened animal injures several people in the crowd; and so on throughout his whole life he attempts to do good to his fellow-men but always fails. There is a touch of fatalism in this story. Une Histoire de l'Autre Monde, (1) the longest story of the collection, gives us bits of romanticism, particularly in description.

Le Pavé (2) is written in a different tone; here one finds, not stories in the commonly accepted sense of the word, but charmingly reminiscent views of Parisian life. Its Aphorismes Préliminaires give the key-note of the book in such expressions as the following: "Qui a le mieux senti la campagne? Est-ce le botaniste, qui classe des plantes sèches dans un herbier? N'est-ce pas plutôt le rôdeur, qui rentre avec du foin plein ses cheveux et des queues de pâquerettes entre les dents?"----- (3). "Le moineau de Montmartre n'est point pareil au moineau de Montparnasse. Savoir les distinguer, tout est là". Il fait Froid (4) reads almost like one of Dickens' Christmas Stories - full of quaint conceits and pretty scenes. Le Pavé resembles none of the other books of short stories either in style or subject-matter.

Truandailles (5) is a prose Chanson des Gueux. What is true of the book of verse may also be said of Truandailles, except that it is the "gueux de Paris" principally, who figure in the latter. Most of the tales are naturalistic in their entirety; this is even more true of Cauchemars. (6) As the title indicates, these stories

1. Les Morts Bizarres, p.69.
2. 1883.
3. Le Pavé, p.2.
4. Ibid. p.23.
5. 1890.
6. 1892.

are veritable nightmares and quite as hopeless from the point of view of romantic tendencies as Les Morts Bizarres or Les Blasphèmes. La Miseloque (1) is a study of the gueux of the theater, a theme which Richepin had already worked out more fully in Braves Gens: each of the stories of La Miseloque develops the pet theory of its hero; some of them are ridiculous, some pitiful, but all are earnestly sustained and worked for. Here we come back to the idealistic side of romanticism again. These stage people are all idealists in their own way; they are striving for something which they believe to be higher and greater than that which they possess. And Richepin is in sympathy with them - as gueux; he tells us in his preface to La Chanson des Gueux; "J'aime mes héros, mes pauvres gueux lamentables, et lamentables à tous les points de vue; car ce n'est pas seulement leur costume, et c'est aussi leur conscience qui est en loques. Je les aime, non à cause de cela, mais parce que j'ai compris cela." (2)

Grandes Amoureuses, (3) which is a collection of tales drawn from ancient history, works over in prose, to some extent, the material used in Les Caresses. Richepin has a fondness for using a second time in new form, his older themes; this has already been noted in the case of Braves Gens and La Miseloque. While he does not carry the repetition far enough for one to accuse him of lack of originality, there is still a sufficiently noticeable tendency

1. 1893.

2. La Chanson des Gueux, p.XV.

3. 1896.

in that direction. The "grandes amoureuses" whom he chooses from history include Delilah, Judith, Helen and Sappho. The two Bible stories are admirably told in spite of Richepin's aversion to religion, which, it may be supposed, was less violent than at the time when Les Blasphèmes was written. Most of the tales, like so many in the other volumes, are pure naturalism. "L'Asie est par excellence le pays de l'amour sensuel, le paradis de la chair". (1) Both in this book and in Contes de la Décadence Romaine (2) Richepin's love for the classics and his own classic tendencies come out strongly.

Madame André, (3) Richepin's first long novel, is another example of the exaltation of sensual love; here however we find realism tempered by other elements. The heroine becomes the mistress of a rather mediocre poet, Lucien Ferdolle, to whose success she devotes everything she possesses. Not content with personal sacrifice she even robs her little daughter of her inheritance to finance his literary ventures. Then the young man turns ingrate, marries for social position and forgets the great woman who has made him what he is. Lacking her inspiration, he becomes commonplace. One day, seated in his sunny dining room, he learns that she is dead; the newspaper describes Madame André as "the author of Lucien Ferdolle". He realizes at last that without her he has become less than nothing. This story, like Madame Bovary, of which it is strongly reminiscent, is the history of a woman who loves much and

1. Grandes Amoureuses, p.116.
2. 1898.
3. 1877.

gives all for her love. Only, Madame André is a more pathetic picture because her sacrifice has been greater and her capacity for feeling is larger.

La Glu (1) goes to the extreme of naturalism; the story is a display of naked, ugly passions, without mitigation of any sort. Here we find Richepin again in the spirit of Les Blasphèmes. The violence of this book is in striking contrast to the romantic idealization of Madame André.

In Miarka, la Fille à l'Ourse more than in any other of his (2) novels, Richepin shows romantic tendencies. Gypsy life, with all its strange customs and half-superstitious atmosphere, is the theme of the story. Miarka, whose mother died at her birth, is nourished by Pouzzli, the bear, rather than that she should draw in civilized ideals at the breast of a peasant-woman. La Vougne, the fierce old grandmother, is the conservator of the traditions of her race. Miarka shall be queen of the tribe; her whole training has this end in view. She is compelled to learn the contents of the mysterious books which the old woman preserves so carefully and no other education is permitted her, as far as books are concerned. She is to await the coming of the prince whom she shall marry. The way this prince, so long looked for, arrives, is one of the finest bits of fantasy in the whole story. Miarka, having repulsed the friendly villagers and having been freed from Gleude, her half-idiot

1. 1881.
2. 1883.

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adorer and follower, awaits the prince. And at last he comes; she adorns herself with the finery left her by la Vougne for that purpose, goes out to meet him, and, with the great caravan of his retinue, she goes away to be queen of the tribe. There are several scenes in Miarka which are repulsive in their naturalism (1) but aside from those the book is altogether romantic. There is so much in it that is fanciful and, in a way, idealistic too, that its general tone of romanticism is incontestable.

Braves Gens (2) brings the reader of Richepin's novels back to Parisian life. Its people are poor and struggling actors and musicians. The two principal characters, Tombre and Yves de Kergouet, have their theories, each of his own art, which they maintain and dispute about with great vigor. "C'est dans un cénacle de réformateurs artistiques, qu'Yves et Marchal (Tombre) s'étaient connus et pris d'amitié pour la première fois". (3) Tombre, the actor, is a visionary who has no opportunity to demonstrate his theories of dramatic art; no more has Yves, who has a mathematical theory of music, - "le seul (art) aussi, qu'on peut réduire en formules chiffrées et générales ainsi que des équations d'algèbre". These touches of the bizarre and outlandish are common in Richepin's novels. In L'aimé and Lagibasse they pass over into the realm of the mysterious and occult. The people of Braves Gens are saner, however, and their fixed ideas are comparatively harmless ones.

1. See, for instance, the birth of Miarka, p.29ff and the death of Gleude, p.315ff.
2. 1886.
3. Braves Gens, p.53.

Césarine (1) is reminiscent of Richepin's experiences in the war of 1870 and the Commune. Its tragedy hinges on the attempt of an old soldier, with the military ideals which a long army career has confirmed in him, to force his son to take his place in the ranks, though the latter is weak in body and unfitted for such service. Césarine, the woman student of mathematics, is surrounded with mystery in the earlier part of the story, when all the boys of the neighboring lycée are in love with her, or fancy they are, because of her marvelous knowledge. Later she appears as the friend of Paul, the son of the soldier, who imagines he also is in love with her. There is a sort of fatalism in her attraction for him; she possesses no physical charms or other means to appeal to him, except her kindness. Furthermore, she is much older than he. The old soldier appears and tries to force Paul to take part in the battle against the Commune but Césarine keeps him concealed as long as she can. At the last they die together, shot as Communists by the soldiers. The most strongly romantic features of Césarine are the entêtement of the soldier on the military question and the description of the Cabinet Littéraire where Césarine first appears.

In Le Cadet (2) Richepin employs all his fanciful conceptions of the province of Thiérache (3) and the Bohemian origin of its people. Some of the best of his nature descriptions are to be found in this book. "Le cadet", Amable Randoin, returns from Paris,

1. 1888.

2. 1890.

3. Le Cadet, p.1ff.

where he has spent his inheritance, to the old home, now owned by his brother. He feels himself seized by a great love for the land and a jealousy of his brother's possession of it. Seeing that no children are born to his brother, who has married with the express intention of leaving an heir, he conceives that it is his duty to fill his place. The wife of Désiré, the elder brother, becomes unfaithful to him with Amable and the heir which is born is a child of the latter. The end of the story is tragic. Amable, maddened by the death of the child and by Désiré's insufferable vaunting of his ownership of the land, murders his brother. He does it in such a manner that the crime is laid to le Borgnot, an old vagabond who has really caused it by his insinuations to Amable that the latter has been kept out of his rights. So at last he comes into possession of the land which he loves, but his love for it has become a madness; finally he is found one day, dead, but even in death embracing the ground as a lover embraces his mistress. Naturalism is strong in this novel; many of the scenes are described in a style very similar to that of Zola. In spite of this tendency, however, there are several predominating ideas in the book which mark it as romantic. Amable's love for the soil of his home and his idealization of it, though it becomes an obsession at the last, is nevertheless something to be reckoned with. Then, the almost supernatural domination of the mind of le Borgnot over Amable's is worked out in a way which, while possible in real life, is not altogether probable. Finally, the descriptions of Thiérache and the origin of its people, savor strongly of romanticism.

Richepin's next novel, L'Aimé, (1893) is such a mixture of sensualism, geometry, mysticism and various other elements that one

is at a loss to explain its significance. The cult of Don Juanism, which is its central theme, is explained by propositions similar to those of geometry. (1) The mysterious Don Juan is kept from sight throughout the story but the whole action centers in him; his position in the eyes of his followers is that of a sort of demigod, whom they worship. The principal romantic elements of the novel are the air of mystery which pervades it and the singular mathematical system involved, which latter reminds one of the algebraic music of Yves de Kergouet in Braves Gens.

Flamboche (2) is a story of disillusionment. The young man who is the hero is made the victim of numerous financial schemes to ruin him. In the end he loses confidences in everything and everybody and his answer to all questions is "Ca m'est égal". (3) And yet, in spite of his indifference, when he is leaving all the pettiness and vileness with which he has been in contact, he feels joyous and hopeful for the future; he recalls an old Irish song; "Tenez-vous raide, Paddy!" which his mother sang to him, and the advice of his father; "Poitrine, petit! Toujours, quand même! Poitrine avec ton âme". (4) He remembers the kindness, too, of Chugnard and his wife, his school preceptors, who, paid to ruin him, had instead shown him kindness after their fashion. The spirit of Flamboche is entirely realistic; sordidness, meanness and vice are the motives which dominate it and they are depicted without

1. L'Aimé, p.149.

2. 1895.

3. Flamboche, p.381ff.

4. Ibid. p.397.

mitigation.

Lagibasse (1) again celebrates Richepin's natal province of Thiérache (2) and here also, as in Le Cadet, we find love for the land of one's birth figuring in the story. Valentin Lelup de Marcoussy de Lagibasse, having put his affairs in order at home, goes to Paris to study philosophy. There he falls in with an unfrocked priest and two pupils who involve him in a mathematico-sensual system which eventually drives him insane. This theme carries us back to L'Aimé. Lagibasse, however, is much more clear and direct; it lacks the mysticism of the earlier novel in some respects, though the abbé's system of philosophy and his appearance to Valentin in a trance-state (3) are decidedly unreal. This fantastic philosophy, which fascinates one by its very inanity, is characteristic of so many of Richepin's stories that an example of it is given here; "Une fois de plus le Neutre l'essentiel s'est polarisé, puis reconstitué. Une fois de plus Aïsh et Aïsha se sont superposés et il n'en est resté que l'a qui est l'o avec un jambage, qui est zéro accru de un, lequel est le verbe du Silence. Une fois de plus Iod-Hé-Vau-Hé redevient Hé, celui du Tarot perdu. Une fois de plus le Non-Etre a eu besoin de l'Etre. Mais une fois de plus n'est qu'un Nombre et tous les Nombres ont pour matrice zéro, et zéro pour tombe. Et Tò est Tò. (4)

1. 1900.

2. Lagibasse, Chapters I and II.

3. Ibid. p.279ff.

4. Requiem pronounced by the abbé over the bodies of Valentin and Zénaïde, Ibid. p.352.

V

DRAMA

When we come to consider Richepin's dramas we find in them more romantic tendencies than in either his novels or his books of verse. Their scenes are laid in places remote either in time or distance from the life of today; their language, being couched in verse, has nothing of realism about it; and, finally, we find in them the romantic spirit which characterized so many of his novels.

Richepin's first dramatic work was a one-act piece, L'Etoile, (1) written in collaboration with André Gill. Its theme is pathological; the old Englishman, Sir Richard, driven insane by the desertion of his home by his young wife, Bella, is always dreaming of the stars;

Certes, on s'est toujours trompé sur la nature
Des étoiles, toujours. Pourtant la chose est sûre,
Ce sont tout bonnement des chandelles.- Voilà! -----
Aux mères qui s'en vont, mauvaises, d'ici-bas,
Sans un baiser d'enfant, le ciel ne s'ouvre pas.
Elles pleurent alors, mais trop tard, insensées!
Les larmes de leur coeur qu'elles n'ont pas versées,
Et se tordent les bras, suppliantes.- En vain.
L'ange des châtimens, qui veille au seuil divin,
Leur donne une chandelle allumée, et les chasse. (2)

1. 1873.

2. L'Etoile, p.10.

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At the end of the piece, Sir Richard murders his young son, Georges. Bella is terribly punished for her infidelity by this insane act, and the grewsome little drama closes with the death of Sir Richard, who, reverting to his illusion of the stars, exclaims;

L'Etoile! Elle pâlit!... Quel baiser! quelle étreinte!

L'Etoile a disparu. La chandelle est éteinte.

In this drama one recognizes readily the ultra-romantic tone which appears later in Le Cadet and Lagibasse; there is much in its fantastic imagery and gloomy morbidness which reminds one of Poe and Baudelaire.

Nana-Sahib had its first production at the Porte-Saint-Martin, December 20, 1883, with Sarah Bernhardt as Djamma. Aside from the stir caused by Richepin's audacious appearance in the title-rôle on the last night, the play aroused little interest; most of the criticisms written about it were adverse and, in short, it was a mediocre success. Its scene is laid in India, during the revolt of the native princes against British rule. (1) Nana-Sahib wishes to become ruler but is betrayed by Tippoo-Raï and others and in the last scene he and Djamma perish together in the flames of a sacrificial fire in the catacombs of Siva, where they are imprisoned by the malice of Cimrou who dies with them.

The splendors of East Indian court life lent themselves well to the creation of a drama, especially in the matter of scenic effect.

1. 1857-8.

It has been said that the world is a stage, and that we are all players in it. This is a very old idea, but it is still true. The world is a stage, and we are all players in it. The world is a stage, and we are all players in it.

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The necessary tragic element was furnished by the hatred of the natives for their new masters, the English. Nana-Sahib is full of touches of vivid local color furnished by the ceremonies of Eastern religious and native customs. The classic verse-form does not lend itself well to a modern subject as a general rule and this is the case in Nana-Sahib. In two or three places only does the subject-matter rise to a grandeur fitting the form. Perhaps the best example of this is the closing speech of Nana-Sahib, part of which follows;

Oui, monte, monte encore, ô flamme ardente et folle!

Notre amour avec toi prend l'essor et s'envole.

C'est parmi les chansons de ton hymne vermeil

Que nous allons dormir notre dernier sommeil.

In spite of the lack of true greatness in this drama Richepin has invested the character of Nana-Sahib with a melancholy grandeur which throws him out in relief from the pettiness of most of the other personages of the piece. His misfortunes and tragic end lend a romantic tone to an otherwise somewhat realistic picture of East Indian affairs in the fifties.

Richepin's next production for the stage was Monsieur Scapin, a comedy which shows Molière's hero in an epoch of prosperity. The plot deals with the efforts of Tristan, a soi-disant pupil of Scapin, to rival him in intrigue. (1) Many of the situations are ingenious and on the whole, the spirit of the first Scapin (2) is

1. Monsieur Scapin was first played at the Comédie Française Oct. 27, 1886.

2. Molière's (Les Fourberies de Scapin).

The following facts are taken from the report of the
Commissioner of the General Land Office, dated
October 1, 1890, and are published for the information of the
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well imitated. Most of the dialogue is broad comedy but occasionally there is interspersed a bit of lyric beauty. Scapin, acknowledging his defeat, shows Tristan that he, nevertheless, has no right to claim the victory.

Scapin.

Montrant Suzette et Florisel (the lovers who have successfully evaded him).

Les vrais triomphateurs, mon ami, les voici.

Et tant que durera le monde, c'est ainsi;

Car on perd à coup sûr, si bien qu'on s'y connaisse,

Quand on a contre soi l'amour et la jeunesse. (1)

One might almost call Le Flibustier (2) a dramatization of the spirit of La Mer, so much of the atmosphere of the poems is thrown into it. The story is a variation of the Enoch Arden theme. Legoëz, an old fisherman, awaits for years the return of his grandson from a voyage. At last a companion of the latter appears and the old man, in his joy, mistakes him for Pierre, the real grandson. Jacquemin, who has not the heart to undeceive the old man, allows him to believe that he is really his grandson. Marie-Anne, Legoëz' daughter, and his granddaughter, Janik, learn from Jacquemin that Pierre is probably lost. Janik falls in love with the stranger and then the real Pierre appears. After much trouble and strife the affair is

1. Monsieur Scapin, p.85.

2. Comédie Française, May 14, 1888.

settled ; Legoëz prefers Jacquemin to Pierre because he still loves the sea while the latter is tired of it. The atmosphere of this drama is altogether romantic. The plot, the characters and the whole milieu are full of the adventurous spirit of sea life.

Le Chien de Garde (1) is exceptional among Richepin's dramas in that it is written in prose. The story is that of a weak-spirited young man drawn away from his duties by frivolous associates. An old soldier of the Emperor and friend of his father is left to guard him and in adherence to his duty, the strict disciplinarian feels obliged to shoot his pupil, when, disgraced, he will not kill himself. The drama is more or less realistic and pessimistic but a romantic trait is to be found in the stern idealism of Férou.

Richepin has figured several times as a comic opera librettist, remodeling some of his dramas and novels for musical settings or producing new material. Le Flibustier appeared in operatic form at the Opéra-Comique, with music by César Cui, in January, 1894. Le Chemineau reappeared as an opera in 1907. Besides these he has produced some works used originally as librettos. The first of these was Le Mage (2), in which he glorifies the ancient race of Touranians from whom he claimed to be descended. This work is altogether romantic ; its very nature prevents the possibility of its being anything else. Its scenes are filled with the mystic religion of the ancient people and with their wars and victories.

-
1. Théâtre des Menus Plaisirs, June, 1889.
 2. Produced at the Académie Nationale de Musique, Mar. 16, 1891, with music by Massenet. Miarka, with music by Alexandre Georges, appeared at the Opéra-Comique, November, 1905.

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Par le Glaive (1) is a drama of the Middle Ages, dealing with the revolt of the Italian citizens of Ravenna against the tyranny of the Great Company in 1359. There are, in it, a romantic plot, much intrigue, some scenes in which the stage is crowded with contentious soldiers and bourgeois, a great deal of declamation and a complicated love situation. Par le Glaive is perhaps the most melodramatic of all Richepin's dramas and yet it contains some well-written lines and clever inventions. The laxity and viciousness of Conrad's court are well contrasted with the patriotism and fervent religion of the Italians. Strada, one of the leaders of the people, urging Rinalda to sacrifice herself to the cause by giving up her claim to Prince Guido so that he may marry a woman from the common people to unite the various factions, points her to the example of Christ ;

Notre-Seigneur tomba trois fois sur le chemin.

Trois fois! Je comprends donc que votre pas faiblisse,

Pauvre femme tremblante, en marchant au supplice.

Mais songez bien que si le monde fut sauvé

C'est que Notre-Seigneur trois fois s'est relevé. (2)

Richepin, in this drama, gives suggestions of religious idealism which were more fully developed later in La Martyre. In both he shows his ability to portray, and even to exalt, a Christianity in which he did not himself believe.

1. Comédie-Française, Feb. 8, 1892.

2. Par le Glaive, p.99.

The first of these is the fact that the
 system of the world is not a simple one. It is a
 complex one, and it is one that is constantly
 changing. The system of the world is a
 system of many parts, and it is a system
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La scène est au pays des chansons populaires,
Au temps des légendes, enfui!

Mais, pour les sentiments et les vocabulaires,
La scène est en France, aujourd'hui. (1)

Thus does Richepin characterize his next drama, Vers la Joie, an Arcadian story of a prince who goes out into the fields, falls in love with a shepherdess and marries her, just as they did "au temps des légendes". Romanticism is here at its best; the entire drama is an expression of the old, conventional, idealized country-life theme, in which royalty masqueraded in the garb of shepherds and shepherdesses. Some of the verse in this drama is very pretty and well-suited to the theme (2); altogether it is an exceedingly clever piece of work. (3)

Théâtre Chimérique (4) is a collection of one-act pieces covering a wide range both in style and subject-matter. Many of them are satirical sketches of modern foibles; some are aimed at prudery and false modesty (5), others at political or social faults (6). Most of them, as the title indicates, are drawn from the realm of the unreal; animals or abstract personages play the parts, fairies appear and chimerical scenes take place.

More than any of his other works, either poetry, novel or drama, Richepin's Le Chemineau (7) shows the manner in which he subtly infused romantic elements into them. The chemineau is an altogether

1. Vers la Joie, page opp. "Personnages"

2. See Bibus' speech on the making of wine, p.102.

3. Comédie-Française, Oct. 13, 1894.

4. 1896.

5. Faire sans Dire, p.49; Chiennerie, p.207.

6. Interviews, p.179.

7. Odeon, Feb. 16, 1897.

idealized tramp, especially toward the end of the drama, when he returns. The kindness and consideration he shows and the remarkable talents which he has are not characteristic of the ordinary tramp. The story of Le Chemineau is one of common everyday farm life but it is idealized by the poetic language and romantic imagery of Richepin. Some of his best dramatic verse is to be found in this drama. The scene between Toinette and the Chemineau when he returns is particularly good; she is telling him of her resignation to his flight and how she consoled herself;

Je pensais: "Quand l'oiseau se sent pris à la glu,

"Effaré, s'arrachant les plumes, l'aile folle,

"Oubliant tout, son nid, sa compagne, il s'envole

"Vers le libre horizon grand ouvert devant lui.

"Ainsi mon chemineau loin de moi s'est enfui!

"Tout triste de m'avoir quittée, oh! oui, sans doute.....

"Content quand même, puisqu'il est sur sa grand'route!" (1).

The little dialect songs which the Chemineau sings and the way in which he announces his coming by them add charm to the scenes in which he appears. One of the best of them is in the scene at the tavern where he wins the good graces of the innkeeper and his wife;

Cueillera, cueilleraï

La fraise et la framboise.

Cueillera, cueilleraï,

1. Le Chemineau, p.94.

Je les cueille à mon gré,
Et dans mon vin je les écrase.
Ah! cueillera, je les cueille, cueillerai,
La fraise et la framboise. (1)

The last act finds the Chemineau filled with his old desire for the road and, while the family is attending the midnight Mass of Christmas Eve, he steals away, leaving them forever because of the Wanderlust which will not allow him to remain beneath a roof. He is as faithful to the call as was la Vougne in Miarka. This fidelity to an idea is one of the most strongly marked romantic touches in the whole play and the Chemineau's own expression of it is a fitting close to the story of his life:

L'ai-je gagné, moi?...Non....Je serais un voleur
De mourir ainsi!....Moi, je suis un grenipille,
Un vagabond, un hors-la-loi, hors la famille,
Un qui, dans ses haillons de gueux pour tout linceul,
Saura partir ainsi qu'il partit toujours, seul,
Sans parents, sans amis, sans rien sans qu'il redoute
De mourir comme il a vécu, sur la grand'route.
Voici la cloche! On sort de l'église. Adieu, vieux!
Tes aimés vont venir pour te fermer les yeux.
Je les aime aussi, moi!...Mon gas!...Pauvre Toinette!
Fuir sans leur dire adieu! Ho! Mais, si je m'arrête,

1. Ibid. p.73.

Si je les revois, je.....je ne partirai pas!

Je dois partir. Adieu, Toinette! Adieu mon gas!...

Ah! qu'à leur souvenir tout mon coeur s'illumine!

Et toi, suis ton destin! Va, chemineau, chemine!

La Martyre (1), which followed Le Chemineau, deals with a more serious theme, namely the martyrdom of the Christians in Rome, during the second century of the Christian era. Here again as in Par le Glaive and Les Truands Richepin shows his fondness for scenes remote in time from the present. The plot centers about the conversion of Flammeola, a patrician woman, by the priest Johannes. During their frequent meetings they fall in love with each other and it is at the crucifixion of Johannes that Flammeola, driven by love for him, becomes a Christian. The inner significance of this drama seems to be the triumph of human love rather than of religion but the Christians are sympathetically depicted in spite of Richepin's one-time bitterness against all religion.

Les Truands (2) pictures the adventures of François Villon and his vagabond friends. The resemblance of Richepin's career to that of the famous truand of the fifteenth century is sufficiently strong to establish a certain sympathy between them. We have already seen that Richepin's poems have been compared in style to Villon's. Les Truands gives a romantic flavor to the doings of the

1. Comédie-Française, Apr.18. 1898.

2. Odéon, Mar.22, 1899.

vagabond poet, which is entirely in keeping with his character as we know it.

Don Quichotte (1), Richepin's dramatization of Cervantes' tale, was severely criticized at the time of its first appearance. Many of the attacks made on the piece seem unjust; its verse is excellent and its situations are admirably managed, especially the "shadow scene" where the distorted silhouettes of the slim knight and his fat squire appear on the wall as they go forth to seek adventure, and the first appearance of the Don, disclosed by the drawing of a curtain. The critics seem to have adopted a sort of "hands off" policy in regard to the dramatization of Don Quixote; several attempts had already failed before Richepin tried his fortune with it. Perhaps it is unjust to attribute these failures entirely to unfavorable criticism; popular prejudice may have had something to do with it. One gets preconceived ideas of what a well-known hero of fiction should be like. When Rostand wrote Cyrano de Bergerac he chose a hero little known to the general public and his drama was a marvelous success. Richepin's Don Quichotte deals with much the same theme - a man, ridiculous in personal appearance and yet able to hold the sympathies of his auditors by his wonderfully strong spirit. Yet Don Quichotte had only a mediocre success although it surrounds its hero with as fine an atmosphere of romance as does Rostand's drama. Besides, there are

1. Comédie-Française, October, 1905.

passages in its scenes in which the poetry compares favorably with that of Cyrano de Bergerac. It is needless to say that this drama, together with Le Chemineau, represents Richepin at his best as a romanticist.

VI

CONCLUSION

The reading of the biography of Jean Richepin brings the conviction that, if his writings were in any way to reflect the experiences of his early life, they could not fail to show romantic tendencies. Living, as he did, a nomadic life for many years, he was bound to be influenced by much that could not be expressed in terms of simple realism or even in the extravagancies of naturalism. That he did put much of his personal experiences into his works has already been shown, especially in the case of Miarka, of Le Cadet, of Lagibasse and of La Mer. Further proof that his work is not altogether dominated by realism is furnished in his own disclaimer of alliance with any school.

In the matter of critical opinion a considerable amount of evidence has been submitted to show that trustworthy authorities such as Jules Lemaître, Lanson and Claretie, together with others of lesser rank, have recognized Richepin as a writer who manifests certain traits of romanticism. The main contention of this thesis is that the critics have not gone far enough in this direction but have attached too much importance to his realism. In many of the criticisms quoted, the single sentence which appears here is the only reference made to the idealistic side of Richepin. In works like Miarka and Les Caresses they have seen too much of the realism in them to permit their seeing also the subtler romantic

spirit back of it.

The study of Richepin's work has brought out the fact that he approaches romanticism from two separate points of view; first from the pathological side (the "last stage of romanticism" of Lanson) and also from the idealistic or true romantic side. Examples of the first have been cited in Les Morts Bizarres and Le Cadet; of the second in Le Flibustier and Don Quichotte. He is romantic both by way of the Decadents and in direct line of descent.

In his poems it has been shown that Richepin imitated the classics without being bound strictly by their limitations as to form. On the other hand he has found his attempts at realistic poetry to be tinged with romanticism, which was wellnigh impossible to avoid in verse. In the short story the best of his tales bear the same mark, though he found here the most fitting vehicle for realistic presentation. Most of his novels, when viewed in their entirety and not with regard to single isolated portions, show a romantic spirit dominating the development of the story. Finally, in the drama, which was the "cradle of romanticism", Richepin presents an almost unbroken series of strongly romantic works.

In brief, then, the work of Jean Richepin, influenced in the direction of romanticism by his career, has in it a survival of that earlier school, which survival has been neglected by students of literature and which should be accorded more recognition than it has heretofore received.

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the train was the cold. It was a sharp contrast to the warm weather of the South. I had heard that the weather was good, but I didn't realize how cold it would be. I was wearing a heavy coat, but it wasn't enough. I was shivering as I walked through the snow. The snow was deep and soft, and it was everywhere. I had never seen so much snow before. It was a beautiful sight, but it was also a little scary. I was alone in a strange place, and I didn't know anyone. I was looking for a place to stay, but I couldn't find one. I was walking for hours, and I was getting tired. I was starting to give up when I saw a small house in the distance. I walked towards it, and I found a warm fire burning in the hearth. I was safe. I was home.

I was in a small town, and I was the only person there. I was looking for a place to stay, but I couldn't find one. I was walking for hours, and I was getting tired. I was starting to give up when I saw a small house in the distance. I walked towards it, and I found a warm fire burning in the hearth. I was safe. I was home. I was in a small town, and I was the only person there. I was looking for a place to stay, but I couldn't find one. I was walking for hours, and I was getting tired. I was starting to give up when I saw a small house in the distance. I walked towards it, and I found a warm fire burning in the hearth. I was safe. I was home. I was in a small town, and I was the only person there. I was looking for a place to stay, but I couldn't find one. I was walking for hours, and I was getting tired. I was starting to give up when I saw a small house in the distance. I walked towards it, and I found a warm fire burning in the hearth. I was safe. I was home. I was in a small town, and I was the only person there. I was looking for a place to stay, but I couldn't find one. I was walking for hours, and I was getting tired. I was starting to give up when I saw a small house in the distance. I walked towards it, and I found a warm fire burning in the hearth. I was safe. I was home.

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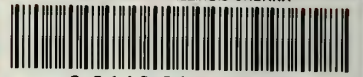
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